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THE US-NORDIC PARTNERSHIP IN TERMS OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH / 21ST CENTURIES

Introduction

The Nordic countries and the United States of America have much in common. Almost 11 million Americans (4.5 % of the population) claim Nordic ancestry. They live in the regions where their forefathers had settled, especially parts of Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, North and South Dakota States. Although they do not use their native languages on everyday basis, their culinary traditions, ways of spending holidays, religion and many other cultural aspects have been preserved, thus creating a unique mixture of Nordic and American traditions. The mainstream American culture has been noticeably shaped by Nordic influence².

Democracy, the rule of law, gender equality, respect for human rights, equal treatment of all people regardless of race, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity are the fundamental values which unite the Nordic countries and the USA, and constitute the natural basis for their cooperation. Northern European countries owe their prosperity to long-term investments in human capital, creating equal opportunities for participating in labour market, advanced health care system, education and instruments of family support. These were the first countries in the world to grant women the right to vote and nowadays remain the leaders as regards gender equality. The influence of women in politics and social development has been significant. Social insurance being a major part of the Nordic model of social policy makes the societies stronger, but also becomes an important tool from the economic perspective³.

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² Oskar Bandle ed., *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), Vol. 2, 2128; compare: Dawid C. Mauk, *Scandinavians*, in: *A Nation of Peoples: A Sourcebook on America's Multicultural Heritage*, ed. Elliott Robert Barkan (Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 1999), 465 and the following.

³ Olli Kangas, Joakim Palme, *Social Policy and Economic Development in the Nordic Countries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), passim.

The example of the Nordic region proves that the idea and practice of a welfare state is beneficial for the whole society. Transparency, accountability and good governance, strong market economy, free trade, prosperity, space for civil society and sustainable development are crucial for political stability, security and social well-being. The Nordic countries and the USA are aiming to achieve these goals and promote them in their strategies. President Barack Obama confirmed the idea at the US-Nordic summit in May 2016 by saying: “The world would be more secure and more prosperous if we had more partners like our Nordic partners”⁴. During the meeting he continued: “Our Nordic partners are not large countries, but there are almost no issues that we deal with - whether in terms of security or economics or humanitarian assistance - where the Nordic countries are not some of our most reliable and effective and important partners”⁵.

The following article aims to present the US-Nordic collaboration in the area of security. The author has put forward a thesis that the US-Nordic partnership is built on shared values and strong bonds, which allows the countries to promote a common vision of the secure and stable world as well as to make effective decisions and take joint efforts to meet present-day challenges, and combat threats to the international security. To support it, the author has used the analysis of documents and systems analysis. The article is based on academic literature and source materials – documents, politicians’ statements, statistical and economic data.

The essence of US-Nordic relationship at the background of present-day challenges and threats to security

Small countries of Northern Europe have, in inverse proportion to their size, a large contribution into international efforts aiming to fight terrorism, illnesses, climate change, illegal migration and to protect natural environment. Thus, they are important partners for the United States which, being the NATO leader, plays the key role in maintaining and increasing security. This fact is emphasised and highly valued by the Nordic countries, which support peace, democracy and human rights, and join in international actions and missions to protect and promote the above-mentioned values worldwide, from the Balkans through Afghanistan and up to Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Nordic countries can be characterised by solid political cooperation, high economic interdependence and related model of democratic government. They have many similarities, but also a number of differences e.g. in the area of foreign policy. The Nordic region remains non-uniform as concerns belonging to European and global systems of security, and the resulting guarantee and strategy in terms of

⁴ *Nordic leaders pledge allegiance to NATO at Washington summit*, 13 May, 2016, retrieved 15.07.2016, <https://www.rt.com/usa/342984-nordic-summit-nato-russia/>.

⁵ Quoted in: Gregory Korte, “Obama greets Nordic leaders, saying they ‘punch above their weight’”, *USA TODAY*, 13.05. 2016.

security and defence. Nevertheless, the differences are not an obstacle in facing global challenges and threats of the 21st century, including participating in the military campaign against the ISIS and taking steps to end the conflict in Syria. For years, the Northern European countries have been collaborating in the UN peace missions, the Petersberg tasks, NATO's SFOR/IFOR and ISAF missions. Their active participation has presently been reduced, however the reforms which have been carried out in recent years (in response to increased military and espionage activity of Russia in the region) have given their military forces more expeditionary character.

The Nordic countries and United States have a strong relationship in terms of the defence and security policy.

Since 1951 the USA has been providing for Iceland's defence system on behalf of NATO. The USA was the first country to recognise Iceland's independence in 1944.⁶ Both countries signed a bilateral agreement in 1951, according to which American Naval Air Station Keflavik was established. Prior to that, Keflavik airport was used as a temporary airbase for bombers during World War II⁷. The base was of the key importance during the Cold War due to its location half way between the US East Coast and Europe, which allowed the US to patrol the Arctic and Subarctic waters of the North Atlantic, between Greenland, Iceland and Great Britain, and to monitor the activities of Russian troops.

In 2006 the US announced it would continue to provide for Iceland's defence, but without permanently basing forces in the country. That year, Naval Air Station Keflavik was closed. The 1951 agreement has remained in force, although the US military forces are no longer permanently stationed in Iceland. Iceland has no standing army, but the Icelandic Coast Guard performs most military services and is responsible for maintaining Keflavik military installation. The withdrawal of American forces from Iceland was based on the US decision to change the focus of its defence policy from Europe towards the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea.

In September 2015 Bob Work, the US Deputy Secretary of Defence, while visiting Iceland, inspected the former base at Keflavik. The meeting initiated the talks about strengthening military cooperation between the two countries. The US Navy is inclined to station surveillance aircraft at the former airbase. The reason for the US renewed interest in Keflavik lies in frequent incidents of Russian air and naval "strikes" in some Arctic countries, including Canada, Finland, Norway, Sweden and also Iceland. The plans were confirmed by the Pentagon in February 2016. The US intends to allocate USD 20 million of the 2017 budget to reactivate

⁶ Sverrir Jakobsson, Gudmundur Halfdanarson, *Historical Dictionary of Iceland* (Lanham Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016), 232.

⁷ *Defense of Iceland: Agreement Between the United States and the Republic of Iceland*, May 5, 1951. American Foreign Policy 1950-1955 Basic Documents Volumes I and II, Department of State Publication 6446 General Foreign Policy Series 117 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957).

the facilities and re-establish the infrastructure at Keflavik airport⁸ to house Boeing P-8 Poseidon military aircraft, which is used as anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, and maritime patrol aircraft.

In the light of the information about re-stationing US troops at Keflavik, the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement in February 2016 in order to avoid speculations and in fear of Russia's response⁹. The statement explained that Iceland and the USA were not discussing permanent stationing of US Military Forces at Keflavik. On the other hand, as a consequence of changes in Europe's security environment, they initiated the talks on the subject of increasing US and NATO's presence in the North Atlantic and Iceland, based on mutual defence commitments¹⁰.

The concept of reopening the airbase in Iceland is part of the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI)¹¹. The ERI signals not only the US vast surveillance activities in the Arctic, but also the beginning of the increased commitment to the North and reinforced military presence in Eastern and Central Europe. The aim is to enhance the level of security on NATO's eastern flank.

As far as Norway is concerned, the country has been prepositioning of US military equipment according to the *Marine Corps' Prepositioning Program*, implemented in consistence with the Memorandum of Understanding of January 1981 and the Agreement of October 1981¹². Both countries agreed to strengthen the security of NATO and enhance operational responsiveness. The aim of the Program is to provide (when necessary) rapid 30-day support for the 15 thousand strong brigade, supervised by the Marine Corps. In accordance with the Program, the US army stores military equipment e.g. weapon storage containers, battle tanks, armoured vehicles, multifunctional vehicles and trailers in specially prepared caves in central Norway. The storage of American equipment there first began in 1981 as a precaution against possible confrontation with the Soviet Union and its allies. After the Cold War, the equipment was gradually withdrawn. However, due to the Ukrainian conflict the location has regained its strategic position and the equipment

⁸ Department Of The Navy Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Budget Estimates FY 2017 Program, Military Construction Active Force (MCON) And Family Housing Programs Justification Data As Submitted To Congress February 2016; Department Of The Navy FY 2017 Military Construction Program European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), Index of Locations for Navy and Marine Corps Projects, (Department Of The Navy, 2016), 236.

⁹ As Iceland supported economic sanctions imposed on Russia by the EU because of the Ukrainian conflict, in August 2015 the Federation decided to put an embargo on Icelandic goods.

¹⁰ *No talks on permanent stationing in Keflavik*, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, 10.02.2016.

¹¹ See: *European Reassurance Initiative and Other U.S. Efforts in Support of NATO Allies and Partners*, The White House Office of the Press Secretary, June 03, 2014; *Statement by the President on the FY2017 European Reassurance Initiative Budget Request*, The White House Office of the Press Secretary, February 02, 2016.

¹² *Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) Governing Prestockage And Reinforcement Of Norway Military Readiness Status of the Marine Corps Prepositioning Program in Norway*, United States General Accounting Office Report to Chairman Subcommittee Readiness, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, March 17, 1989.

has been returned to the Norwegian caves. The equipment is well-maintained, unloading operations are carried out in cooperation with the Norwegians, in the newly-built quay in Trondelag region. The decision to increase US military presence in Norway is a firm security guarantee for the country.

As concerns Denmark, on the north-west coast of Greenland there is a US Distant Early Warning Line Station built in 1940s. In 1960s its main task was to detect intercontinental ballistic missiles with radar systems. After the Cold War, the US used the radars to monitor satellites and search for space debris.

Both Denmark and Norway participate in financing the fifth generation single-engine multirole fighter developed by Lockheed Martin within the *Joint Strike Fighter* program. The Norwegian government intends to acquire 52 aircraft for the Norwegian Armed Forces¹³. The Danish government recommended in April 2016, and the Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen announced the following month, the procurement of 27 multirole fighters Lockheed Martin F-35A Lightning II, designed to replace F-16A/B, used currently by Flyvevåbnet (Royal Danish Air Force). The contract worth EUR 7.5 billion is the largest that has been signed by the Danish Prime Minister.

Transborder military exercises are an important element of the US-Nordic cooperation. The example could be regular *Cold Response* exercises held to improve cooperation with NATO and to increase operativeness in harsh winter conditions.

Military cooperation between the US and the Nordic countries creates the basis for their joint response to present-day threats. The main problems of the international community are terrorism and extremism. The US is leading the global coalition to counter ISIS and pays the largest contribution for stabilisation and humanitarian assistance in Iraq and Syria. In February 2016, the US proposed additional contribution of USD 155 million in humanitarian aid for Iraq and over USD 600 million for Syria. Nordic leaders concerned about the growth of the so-called Islamic State, the terrorist organisation, joined the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

Each of the five Nordic countries has joined the US efforts to counter terrorism, providing military and humanitarian support.

Thus, in 2016 Denmark decided to redeploy 7 fighters and 400 military staff members to counter terrorist organisations both in Iraq and Syria, and to reinforce a number of civilian efforts¹⁴. Additionally, the country intends to allocate USD 40 million over three years to stabilise the situation in both countries. The Danish government made a contribution of USD 47 million for the humanitarian assistance in Syria in 2016. Therefore, Denmark is one of a few countries that

¹³ *New Combat Aircraft for the Norwegian Armed Forces*; Norwegian Government Proposes Significant Defence Budget Boost. National budget 2016, Press release Published: 2015-10-08.

¹⁴ *Danish government plans to redeploy F-16 fighter jets in support of the global coalition to counter Da'esh*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Of Denmark, 04.03.2016.

contributes the most *per capita* to fight ISIS both in military and civilian terms¹⁵.

In April 2016 the Finnish government agreed to increase the number of specialised troops in Iraq, which will double the number of specialist military personnel serving in the mission¹⁶. Moreover, Finland has reserved USD 29 million in the 2016 budget to be spent on humanitarian assistance in Syria. Since the beginning of the crisis Finnish humanitarian assistance has amounted to USD 120 million.

Norway and Sweden provide their specialised troops (mainly in Iraq). Norway has increased its military contribution to counter ISIS. In May 2016 Prime Minister Erna Solberg announced that Norway would train Iraqi soldiers and would deploy a military contingent of around 60 soldiers to provide training, advice and operational support to Syrian local forces fighting ISIS. Norway has recently pledged USD 1.2 billion over four years in humanitarian aid in Syria and USD 24 million in stabilisation efforts, including USD 3.1 million for de-mining in Iraq.

Sweden has significantly supported Syria and Iraq. Since 2011 the country has provided over USD 400 million in humanitarian aid, and additionally has decided to offer USD 200 million to address the Syrian crisis over five years¹⁷.

Joint efforts connected with nuclear security, disarmament and non-proliferation are important elements of the cooperation. The countries work together within the UN (the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 regarding the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors), International Atomic Energy Agency, INTERPOL, Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Their actions promote nuclear security and prevent nuclear smuggling. Arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation and reducing the use of high enriched uranium in civil applications are crucial aspect of the cooperation. The destruction of Syria's declared chemical weapon in 2014 was a significant joint achievement of the US, Denmark, Finland and Norway.

The US and the Nordic countries are committed to stabilise the situation in Afghanistan through e.g. strengthening the Afghan government, maintaining international support for the country and encouraging the Taliban to join the peace process. Moreover, the US and the Nordic countries have a common aim in stabilising the situation in Mali and the Sahel region, as well as in Somalia and the Horn of Africa.

The new challenge for the US-Nordic partnership is de-mining the territories of military conflicts. The countries emphasise that civilian support and stabilisation in

¹⁵ *Denmark's Comprehensive Approach To Counter ISIL*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, April 2016; *Denmark's integrated stabilisation engagement in fragile and conflict-affected areas of the world*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice, November 2013; Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Denmark news: *Broad support in the Danish Parliament making Denmark a frontrunner in the fight against Da'esh*, April 2016.

¹⁶ Gerard O'Dwyer, *Finland To Strengthen Training Mission in Iraq*, „Defense News” April 21, 2016.

¹⁷ *Government adopts a new strategy for the Syria crisis*, Government Offices of Sweden, 17.12.2015.

post-conflict countries must address humanitarian hazards posed by landmines and unexploded ordnance. The Nordic countries and the US are committed to support the removal of such weapon, thus making the post-conflict communities safer and setting the stage for recovery and development.

Thus, in June 2016 the governments of the US and Norway established the US-Norwegian Demining Initiative as part of their collaboration in terms of humanitarian aid addressed to the countries affected by military conflicts. Its aim is to help post-conflict communities around the world rebuild. The initiative was built on the Global Demining Initiative for Colombia, which was announced by the governments of Norway and the USA at the beginning of 2016¹⁸. The intention to continue and broaden the US-Norwegian Demining Initiative with other countries of the Nordic region was included in the joint statement of the US and Nordic leaders after the summit in Washington, May 13th 2016. Under this initiative, the US intends to provide USD 10.8 million in 2016 to clear parts of Iraq liberated from ISIS occupation and spend USD 8 million in 2017 to do the same in liberated parts of Syria. Norway intends to provide USD 9.8 million for that purpose in 2016, with a particular focus on Syria and Iraq, and plans to increase financial support for global mine action by USD 15 million in 2017. The essence of Norway and the US initiative was explained by Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende: “Clearing mines and other explosives from land areas is a vital part of the global struggle for peace.” He continued: “The farmers in Ukraine need to know that it is safe to go out into the fields and start food production again. People in rural areas of Colombia need to know that it is safe to move back home. The inhabitants of Syria’s cities need to know that they will not be putting their lives at risk when they start to rebuild buildings that have been destroyed by bombs”¹⁹.

This initiative is a step further towards a broader US-Nordic partnership in terms of international security.

The US-Nordic cooperation and the increased military activity of Russia in Northern Europe

The US and the Nordic countries are concerned by the military growth of the Russian Federation and its increased military activity around the borders. Therefore, they emphasise the necessity of a dialogue with Russia to enhance transparency and reduce the risk in mutual relations. The Nordic countries, especially non-NATO members i.e. Finland and Sweden, have frequently felt pressure from Russia. Both countries were the object of provocative actions taken by Russian aircraft and naval vessels after 2013. Consequently, a debate was initiated which referred to increasing costs of defence and the possibility of

¹⁸ *U.S.-Norwegian Demining Initiative*, (Washington, DC: Media Note Office of the Spokesperson June 15, 2016).

¹⁹ *Norwegian-US mine clearance initiative*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Press release Published: 2016-06-15.

Sweden and Norway joining NATO. Two decades after the Cold War had ended, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict brought the US and the Nordic countries together and focused their attention on the NATO's northern and eastern flank.

The US interest in the Nordic–Baltic region can be traced back to 1998 when the US launched a joint project, the *Northern Europe Initiative* (NEI) to enhance security and stability in the Baltic region²⁰. Its main objective was to integrate Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with western democracies and to strengthen relations with the Nordic partners. The US President Bill Clinton together with three Baltic states signed a document by which the parties agreed to build a strong, socially and economically united region, together with North-West Russia, and additionally to make the region stronger and more stable by collaboration and cross-border relations. Within the initiative, the US together with partners from Sweden, Finland and Norway conducted a number of projects connected with the protection of natural environment. Most of them concerned preventing environmental threats caused by nuclear waste, among others, by increasing transportation safety. Additionally, the US government decided to co-finance the construction of a spent nuclear fuel facility in Murmansk, on the Kola Peninsula. The initiative was subsequently replaced by the Partnership in Northern Europe (e-PINE) – the partnership of the USA, five Nordic and three Baltic states.

The Nordic–Baltic cooperation, which has lasted since the end of the Cold War, is highly valued by the US politicians due to its impact on transatlantic community and promoting positive models of regional cooperation. E-PINE can be an example of joint Nordic-Baltic-US efforts in the Baltic Sea region²¹. The initiative was proclaimed on 15 October 2003 and became an element of the US renewed policy in Northern Europe in an “8+1” format. It was intended to be an important support to strengthen the transatlantic relations and spread security, stability and welfare within the region and outside it. Its objectives were as follows: political security (cooperation to fight terrorism); healthy society and healthy neighbours (combating cross-border health problems such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, but also other transnational problems such as corruption or crime); and vibrant economies (promoting US businesses in the region)²². The countries of the Initiative focused on the cooperation with the US in terms of international issues such as energy security, security policy, relations with Russia and Eastern Partnership countries. Regular meetings in the e-PINE format take place at the level of political directors

²⁰ Dawid Park, Madelene Kornfehl eds., *Baltic Sea Region Brief: Advancing Baltic Sea Region Cooperation 1998-1999*. A Selection of Speeches, Joint Statements Communiques, and Treaties, (Stockholm: Embassy of The United States of America, 1999), 119-120; Charles Ries, “The Baltic Sea Region From a U.S. Perspective”, *Baltinfo* 52/53 (2002): 10-11.

²¹ Strobe Talbott, “An American Perspective on Regional Integration”, *European Security* 1 (2000): 87-89.

²² U.S., *Northern Europe Working to Advance Democracy State Dept.'s Heather Conley testifies on “e-PINE” Initiative*, 22.04.2004, retrieved 15.07.2016. <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2004/04/200404221646151acnosnh0.2221796.html#axzz4IzXCAXQu>.

in Ministries of Foreign Affairs²³.

Thirteen years after starting e-PINE, in September 2013 the US President paid his first official visit to Sweden. Barack Obama met Prime Minister Frederik Reinfeldt and the leaders of other Nordic countries' governments²⁴. The decision to travel to Sweden was taken after the US President had postponed the meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, which was to take place in Moscow in September, the day before G-20 Summit in St. Petersburg (Russia). The reason was the lack of progress in the US-Russia bilateral relations²⁵.

The talks in Sweden concerned economic issues, commitment to human rights protection, countering climate change as well as the problems of international policy and security. The US President confirmed the support for the Nordic cooperation and declared the need to work together in order to strengthen transatlantic security. In the joint statement the politicians recognised the importance of the regional cooperation, but also the cooperation with the US and other partners e.g. the Baltic States. Additionally, they initiated US-Nordic Security Dialogue, a forum for annual meetings held to discuss the opportunities for cooperation in terms of global and regional security and the UN issues, including preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and atrocity prevention. It was announced that the relationship between NATO and partner countries (among others, Sweden and Finland) would be developed. The importance of the Arctic Council was stressed, and also the necessity of cooperation in terms of protection and research into the natural environment of the Arctic, improving living conditions, supporting sustainable development, especially in local communities. In the joint statement issued after the meeting, the Nordic countries and the USA condemned the use of chemical weapon in Syria and declared closer cooperation in

²³ *The U.S. And Northern Europe: The E-Pine Initiative, Hearing Before The Subcommittee On Europe Of The Committee On International Relations House Of Representatives One Hundred Eighth Congress*, April 21, 2004, Serial No. 108-91, Printed for the use of the Committee on International Relations; Tatiana Gfoeller, "Diplomatic Initiatives: An Overview of The Northern Europe Initiative", *European Security* 1 (2000): 98 – 104; Frank Möller, *Thinking peaceful change. Baltic Security. Policies and security. Community building*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 189 and the following; Edward Rhodes, "The American Vision of Baltic Security Architecture: Understanding the Northern Europe Initiative", *Baltic Defence Review* 4 (2000): 91-112; Alexander Sergounin, *Russia and the Challenges of Regional Cooperation in the Northern Europe*, in: *Remaking Europe in the Margins. Northern Europe after the Enlargements*, ed. Ch. S. Browning, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), 105-122; Chrostopher S. Browning, (Aldershot Sergounin, *The United States' Northern Dimension? Prospects for a U.S. Russian Cooperative Agenda in Northern Europe*, PONARS Policy Memo No. 232, Prepared for the PONARS Policy Conference Washington, DC January 25, 2002, retrieved 15.07.2016, https://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/pm_023_2.pdf.

²⁴ *Joint Statement by President Obama and Prime Minister Reinfeldt of Sweden*, retrieved 22.08.2016, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/04/joint-statement-president-obama-and-prime-minister-reinfeldt-sweden>.

²⁵ Dawid Dean, Yana Meerzon, Kathryn Prince eds., *History, Memory, Performance*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 15; *Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's Travel to Russia*, The White House Office of the Press Secretary, August 07, 2013.

terms of security policy. The document contains the obligation of collaboration on the following problems: combating climate change, sustainable development of the Arctic region, promoting human rights and global development²⁶.

Barack Obama's visit in Stockholm was perceived as a symbolic recognition of Sweden and the Nordic countries, which are a significant, though small, actor on the international arena.

For the second time, the leaders of the five Nordic countries met President Barack Obama in the White House in May 2016. The US President admitted that the meeting was to strengthen the US-Nordic collaboration to confront various global challenges, among others, the growth of Russian aggression and its military activity. He expressed his belief that in Europe “smaller nations are not bullied by larger nations”²⁷. The participants of the summit agreed that strengthening security and stability requires appropriate dialogue with Russia which would enhance transparency and reduce the risk of aggression in mutual relations. During the meeting the President said: “We share the same interests and we share the same values. We believe that our citizens have the right to live in freedom and security – free from terrorism and in a Europe where smaller nations are not bullied by larger nations. We believe in free markets, and trade (...). We believe that we have a moral obligation -- to this and future generations -- to confront the reality of climate change and to protect our planet, including our beautiful Arctic”²⁸. Charles Kupchan, President Obama's Adviser for European Affairs noted: “We are usually dealing with a lot of difficult parts of the world (...). The Nordic region of the world is extremely stable, and Democratic, and liberal, you have a part of the world that is peaceful and is contributing to peace and to the humanitarian agenda and many of the interests the United States cares about in a way that is consistent and reliable”²⁹.

The summit was an opportunity to discuss the enhanced cooperation between the US and the Nordic countries, their bilateral relations, but also global problems such as migration and refugees, climate change, energy security, protection of the Arctic's environment, economy, trade, security and defence, development and humanitarian aid (the US and the Nordic countries have a common objective to stabilise the situation in Mali and the Sahel region, also in Somalia and the Horn of Africa, the Somali Peninsula and the Middle East).

Many areas of cooperation were discussed in Washington, but the issues of

²⁶ *Joint Statement by Kingdom of Denmark, Republic of Finland, Republic of Iceland, Kingdom of Norway, Kingdom of Sweden, and the United States of America*, The White House Office of the Press Secretary, September 04, 2013.

²⁷ *Remarks by President Obama, President Niinistö of Finland, and Prime Minister Solberg of Norway at the Nordic Leaders' Summit Arrival Ceremony*. The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, May 13, 2016, retrieved 30.05. 2016, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/05/13/remarks-president-obama-president-niinist%C3%B6-finland-and-prime-minister>.

²⁸ Ibidem.

²⁹ Quoted in: Kevin Liptak, “Obama praises likeminded Nordic nations”, *CNN White House Producer*, May 13, 2016.

security (its numerous dimensions) and defence dominated. In the joint statement the leaders of the Nordic countries and the US decided to increase investments in defence, diplomacy and regional cooperation in order to strengthen European security in “deep partnership based on shared fundamental values”³⁰. Also, they emphasised the necessity of a closer cooperation between NATO and the EU.

Due to the complexity of the international policy and security, politicians often need support from various think-tanks which provide analysis and expertise. During the summit the *Stuart Center for Euro-Atlantic and Northern European Studies* was launched at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. The research centre is dedicated to objective analysis and greater understanding of Northern Europe's political, security, economic and energy developments with a strong focus on the regional implications of rapidly changing Arctic. It is to analyse the role of NATO in Northern Europe, effectiveness of cooperation in the area of security and the development of the Euro-Atlantic partnership³¹.

Conclusion

The US and the Nordic countries play various roles on the international arena. Northern European countries are particularly active in the EU, NATO, and UN, and due to their global commitments are perceived by the US as effective partners in solving present-day international problems. What unites them is the concern about global security and involvement in stabilising conflict-stricken areas, promoting democracy, climate protection and sustainable development of the Arctic, energy, and economy growth. Also humanitarian aid, development of politically and economically unstable countries, the UN preventive diplomacy, participation in international peace missions are equally important. These are key elements of the US policy, but also typical Nordic issues seen from the perspective of the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers as priorities. Currently, the main problems concentrating means and measures are terrorism and brutal extremism, the number of illegal immigrants, refugees and displaced persons unseen since World War II, also the Ukrainian crisis which has caused an unprecedented confrontation of Russia with the US and EU since the Cold War. The aggressive posture of the Federation towards its neighbours has had a great influence on the US interest in the Northern Europe. The Nordic countries are looking towards the US to guarantee their security, which has resulted with the scope and frequency of the mutual contacts. The US, by organising the Washington Summit in 2016, has sent an important signal that it treats the Nordic partners seriously and is

³⁰ “U.S.- Nordic Leaders’ Summit Joint Statement”, *The White House, Office of the Press Secretary*, 13 May, 2016.

³¹ *Lillan and Robert D. Stuart Jr. Center in Euro-Atlantic and Northern European Studies*, retrieved 26.07.2016, <https://www.csis.org/programs/europe-program/lillan-and-robert-d-stuart-jr-center-euro-atlantic-and-northern-european>.

committed to stability in the Nordic region. It must be emphasised that the Nordic countries and the US watch the activities of Russia with a due attention, stress the significance of cooperation and the need of political dialogue with the President of Russian Federation.

The High North, its sustainability and predictability, is equally important. Melting of the polar ice cap is a global problem as it potentially changes the geopolitical balance of the Arctic. Therefore, since the mid-1990s the Nordic countries and the US have been collaborating to promote sustainable development and protection of the High North's natural environment. Opening of the Arctic might not lead to the escalation of the conflict. However, the prospective oil and gas extraction, the development of fishing industry and new navigation routes have created a complex and problematic geopolitical situation which, on the long term, may pose a threat to regional and global security.

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Abstract

Transparency, accountability and good governance, strong market economy, free trade,

prosperity, space for civil society and sustainable development are crucial for political stability, security and social well-being. The Nordic countries and the USA are aiming to achieve these goals and promote them in their strategies. The Nordic countries and United States have a strong relationship in terms of the defence and security policy. The US and the Nordic countries play various roles on the international arena. What unites them is the concern about global security and involvement in stabilising conflict-stricken areas, promoting democracy, climate protection and sustainable development of the Arctic, energy, and economy growth. Also humanitarian aid, development of politically and economically unstable countries, the UN preventive diplomacy, participation in international peace missions are equally important.

Partnerstwo nordycko-amerykańskie w zakresie bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego na przełomie XX i XXI wieku

Przejrzystość, odpowiedzialność i dobre zarządzanie, silna gospodarka rynkowa, wolny handel, dobrobyt, otwarta przestrzeń dla społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i zrównoważony rozwój są kluczem do stabilności politycznej, bezpieczeństwa i dobrobytu społecznego. Są to cele, do których zmierzają, i które promują w swoich strategiach, zarówno kraje nordyckie, jak i USA. To, co je łączy, to troska o globalne bezpieczeństwo i zaangażowanie na rzecz stabilizacji w regionach objętych konfliktami, promowanie wartości demokratycznych, ochrona klimatu i zrównoważony rozwój Arktyki, energia, jak również wzrost gospodarczy. Ponadto istotne są: pomoc humanitarna i współpraca na rzecz rozwoju państw niestabilnych politycznie i gospodarczo, dyplomacja prewencyjna ONZ, jak również udział w międzynarodowych misjach pokojowych.

Key words

Nordic, USA, defence, security cooperation

Słowa kluczowe

kraje nordyckie, Stany Zjednoczone, współpraca, polityka bezpieczeństwa i obrony

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